

COLORADO

SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE



**NATIONAL
AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS
SERVICE**

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PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS

COLORADO HIGHLIGHTS

Colorado growers intend to plant 1,050,000 acres of corn for all purposes in 2009, 16 percent below last year's plantings. Sorghum intentions are 180,000 acres, down 50,000 acres from plantings last year. Winter wheat seedings last fall for harvest in 2009 at 2,500,000 acres, up 100,000 acres from January's report, and up 350,000 acres from the 2008 crop. Growers intend to seed 30,000 acres of spring wheat this year, down 10,000 acres from last year. The area expected to be seeded to oats, at 50,000 acres, is up 5,000 acres from actual seedings a year ago. Planting intentions for barley are down 10,000 acres to 70,000. Growers intend to plant 125,000 acres of sunflowers this year, down 69,000 acres from what they planted in 2008. The acreage of oil varieties is expected total 100,000 acres, down 70,000 acres from last year's plantings. The area planted to non-oil varieties is expected to increase 1,000 acres to 25,000 this year. The State's dry bean growers indicate they will remain unchanged in planted acreage from last year at 48,000 acres. The area planted to sugarbeets is expected to increase 2,500 acres from last year's actual plantings to 36,300 acres. Hay producers in the State intend to harvest 1,600,000 acres this year, up 30,000 acres from the number of acres cut for hay in 2008.

Near average, mountain snowpack should help farmers with appropriate water rights irrigate crops this year. Currently, most growing areas have short soil moisture supplies. Final acreages actually planted for several crops will be determined by irrigation water prospects at planting time and changes in economic conditions between now and actual planting.

UNITED STATES HIGHLIGHTS

Corn growers intend to plant 85.0 million acres of corn for all purposes in 2009, down 1 percent from last year as lower corn prices and unstable input costs are discouraging some growers from planting corn. If realized, this will be the second consecutive year-over-year decrease since 2007 but will still be the third largest acreage since 1949, behind 2007 and 2008. Expected acreage is down from last year in many States, however, producers in the 10 major corn producing States (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) collectively intend to plant 66.3 million acres, up slightly from the 66.1 million acres planted last year.

The 2009 sorghum area intended to be planed for all purposed is estimated at 6.96 million acres, down 16 percent from 2008. Compared with last year, producers in all States are showing a decline in intended acreage. Producers in Kansas intend to plant 2.80 million acres, down 3 percent from the previous year. The large decline is expected in Texas, where farmers intend to plant 750,000 acres less than 2008. Planting was underway in early March across the Lower Valey and Upper Coast regions of Texas, as 18 percent of the State's crop was planted by March 15, two percentage points behind the 5-year average.

Growers intend to plant an estimated 3.40 million acres of oats, up 6 percent from the 3.22 million acres planted in 2008. Most of the increase in acreage is expected to be in the Great Plains States. The largest acreage increase is expected to occur in Iowa, where growers intend to plant 200,000 acres, 50,000 more than last year. Acreage intentions increased or remained unchanged in all but 8 of the estimating States. The largest declines are in the Great Lakes region.

Over please

Barley growers intend to plant 3.95 million acres for 2009, down 7 percent from last year. If realized, this will be the third lowest barley planted acreage on record. In North Dakota, the largest barley-producing State, the expected planted area is

1.55 million acres, down 6 percent from 2008. Growers in California, Minnesota, New York, Washington, and Wyoming intend to decrease their acreage by 20 percent or more. Planted acreage is expected to decline to record low levels in California, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, and Utah. Oregon expects to match its lowest acreage on record.

The 2009 winter wheat planted area is estimated at 42.9 million acres, up 2 percent from the *Winter Wheat Seedings* report. Acreage increases from the previous report were mainly in the Hard Red Winter growing States. States with the most notable acreage increases from the previous estimate were Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado. Of the total acreage, about 30.9 million acres are Hard Red Winter, 8.38 million acres are Soft Red Winter, and 3.65 million acres are White Winter. Winter wheat conditions declined over the winter in several States. Moisture shortages are a concern in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Other Spring Wheat growers intend to plant 13.3 million acres this year, down 6 percent from 2008. Of the total, about 12.7 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. The largest expected acreage decreases are in Montana, down 300,000, North Dakota down 200,000. Growers in both South Dakota and Minnesota intend to plant 100,000 fewer acres than last year.

Producers intend to harvest 60.3 million acres of all hay in 2009, up slightly from 2008. Harvested area is expected to increase from last year throughout most of the Central Great Plains and the Pacific Northwest. Oklahoma, Montana, Kansas, and Wisconsin expect the largest increase in acreage harvested. North Dakota, Texas, North Carolina, and Missouri expect the largest decreases in acreage harvested. Producers in Oklahoma and Montana intend to harvest 240,000 and 200,000 more acres, respectively, while growers in North Dakota and Texas expect to harvest 420,000 and 130,000 less acres, respectively.

Soybeans growers intend to plant an estimated 76.0 million acres in 2009, up slightly from the acreage planted in 2008 and will be the largest on record, if realized. Tightening soybean supplies and lower input costs than corn have resulted in farmers intending to plant more soybean area this year. Compared with last year, the largest increase is expected in Kansas, up 200,000 acres. Increases of 100,000 acres or more are also expected in Arkansas, Iowa, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Ohio. Meanwhile, the States with the largest expected declines are Missouri and South Dakota, both down 150,000 acres. If realized, the planted acreage in Kansas and New York will be the largest on record, and the planted acreage in North Dakota will tie the previous record high.

Sunflower growers intend to plant a total of 2.07 million acres in 2009, down 18 percent from last year, but down only 500 acres from 2007. Area intended for oil type varieties, at 1.74 million acres, is down 20 percent from 2008. The area intended for non-oil varieties, estimated at 332,500 acres, is down 6 percent from last year.

Area planted to sugarbeets for the 2009 crop year is expected to total 1.15 million acres, 6 percent higher than the 2008 planted acreage. Intended plantings increased from last year in all States except California, where producers intend to plant only 25,000 acres. If realized, this will establish a new record low for the fifth straight year in California.

Dry beans growers intend to plant 1.55 million acres in 2009, up 3 percent from the previous year and 1 percent higher than 2007. The increase in planted acres can be attributed in part to favorably stable dry bean prices. Expected area planted to all chickpeas is 96,600 acres, up 18 percent from 2008 but 23 percent lower than 2007. Small chickpea area, at 27,300 acres, is almost 3 times more acres than last year and 2.5 times more than 2007. Large chickpea acreage is expected to be 3 percent lower than last year and 39 percent less than 2007. Small chickpeas are defined as peas that will pass through a 20/64 inch hole screen.